



TREEmendous News



Florida Christmas Tree Association's Newsletter

August 2016

FALL MEETING AT LAWRENCEVILLE, GA

FALL MEETING COMMENTS:

For our Fall Meeting we have decided to join with the Georgia Christmas Tree Association on **August 27, 2016, in Lawrenceville, Ga.** We like to meet with the GACTA every few years, and this is a great opportunity. This is the year that Bill Murray died, and he was a founder in both the Georgia and Florida Associations. The Host Hotel is the Hampton Inn Mall of Georgia, exit 115, off I-85 north of Atlanta, near Lawrenceville, GA. Most will stay Friday night, then the program will start at the Thompson's Church just a few miles from the hotel at 9:00 am and continue through lunch at the Church. They have several speakers set up including a representative from the Christmas Tree Promotion Board. (See Program). At 2:30PM we will adjourn for the tour of Thompson Tree Farm only a few miles from the Church.

I've made my reservation for Friday night Aug 26 by phoning 678-546-1200, and stating I wanted the GACTA rate of \$104. Plus tax. The posted rate on the internet was \$179. To get the group rate register through the corporate code 0002735364. You can do this through the Hampton web site. The approved the rate is \$104. Plus \$18.52 tax for total of \$122.52.

The Thompsons have a great FACEBOOK PAGE which has pictures and comments from customers. They charge for school field trips. They also have a common problem as several of us, they sold out of home-grown trees on Dec 5, last year. They supplement home-grown trees with imported trees. They have a very nice farm, including pumpkins.

Earlier Jewel Lay had planned to host our meeting on August 20, 2016. However, Jewel has been in the hospital with some heart problems. Offer a prayer for Jewel as he has been a dedicated member from the early years.

There are a few more of us that are having some medical problems and because of that we are unable to hold a Fall Meeting in Florida this year, so the exciting alternative is to join with the GACTA for our Fall Meeting, August 27, 2016.

There are some, I know, that won't be able to make the trip to Georgia. Some of you that live near Jodi Utsman can arrange for your supplies from Craig Sorensen, Tim Mitchell's, to be delivered to Jodi's farm. Craig has arranged his schedule to attend the Georgia/Florida meeting in Lawrenceville, and you can order and pick up supplies there. See Tim Mitchell's advertisement and the attached page of specials for the meeting.

Tommy Wagoner will also be attending the Georgia/Florida Meeting. See the Fraser Knoll advertisement, and phone him (877-352-7355) for Show Specials.

Does anyone know of a nursery raising Carolina Sapphires?

Byron Lakeview Nursery, 2149 Lakeview Rd, Byron, GA 31008 has them in 3" pots for \$1.10 (Think minimum is 100.) www.byronlakeviewnursery.com

When Bill Murray died we, the FCTA, sent some flowers, since he had been a loyal friend and one of our Founders. Sara Murray sent the following reply:

Your kindness and sympathy are more deeply appreciated than any word can ever express. The Family of Bill R. Murray.

Sara added in her own handwriting: Thank you for all your support of Bill over the years. He thought so much of your Tree Association. The flowers are beautiful.

Bill and Sara have been a class act, and in inspiration to the Christmas Tree Industry. Hope as many as possible will go to the Georgia/Florida Meeting. We plan to also visit Stone Mountain while I can still crawl up the hill.

Send me your articles or tidbits of information. I prefer email (songerma@hotmail.com) or text 904-535-7822.

Michael Songer , President FCTA

DATES TO REMEMBER:

August 27, 2016

**Georgia/Florida Christmas Tree Assoc. Fall Meeting
Lawrenceville, GA
Hosts: Thompson's Christmas Tree Farm**

Oct. 18-20, 2016

**Sunbelt Expo Moultrie, GA
www.sunbeltexpo.com**

Florida Christmas Tree Association Officers and Board

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August 27, 2016 Show Specials

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Craig Sorensen at 615-497-2299, email info@timmitchellsyulestand.com

Free Freight to show on all items in Stock ordered by August 18th

Yule Stands	2016 Price	Show Price	Orders over \$2100 Price
Small stand 1/2" pin	\$3.95	\$3.90	\$3.60
Medium stand	\$6.50	\$6.30	\$5.90
Super Medium stand	\$8.75	\$8.60	\$8.25
Large stand	\$10.25	\$10.00	\$9.50
Reinforced stand	\$21.50	\$21.00	\$19.75
5 Qt. Water container	\$3.20	\$3.10	\$2.85
10 Qt. Water container	\$4.35	\$4.25	\$4.00
Tree Removal Bags			
50/case	\$48.95	\$45.25	\$44.00
Jumbo Tree bags 48/case	\$60.95	\$57.25	\$52.00
Kirk or Green/Red Netting		\$5.00 off per order	

All orders must be paid and picked up by end of meeting

Craig Sorensen will see you at the summer meeting at:

Thompson's Tree Farm, 1289 Prospect Rd, Lawrenceville, GA



Shearing Equipment



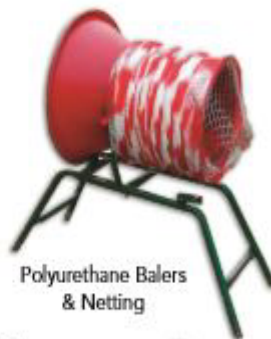
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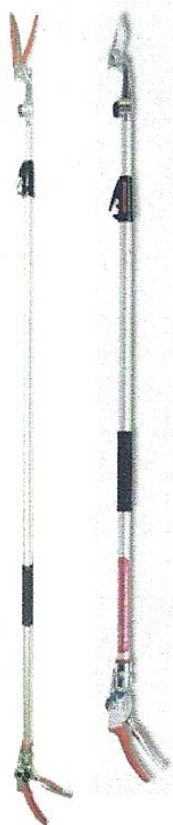
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Our Annual Fall Meeting will be hosted by
Denise and Tommy Thompson
August 27, 2016
Thompson's Tree Farm
1289 Prospect Rd
Lawrenceville, GA 30043



There will be a Board of Directors meeting scheduled
August 26 7:30
At the Hampton Inn, Buford, GA
Pizza Party 6:30—7:30 for traveling members

Hampton Inn Atlanta-Mall Of Georgia

3240 Buford Drive, Buford, Georgia, 30519, USA +1-678-546-1200

Rate is \$104 plus tax. Rate is for GACTA meeting and should be told to clerk when calling hotel. Vernon (manager) has approved.

Rooms are based on availability also, so the sooner you reserve the better.

Meeting location:

From the hotel, take a left out of the parking lot and go to the red light at Gravel Springs Rd (Krispy Kreme will be on the right), take right onto Gravel Springs and go approx. 2 miles to Ivy Creek Rd. on your left...you will see the church on left...take a left and go around the church parking lot and you will see the fellowship building at the back of the church

Directions from church to our farm: go back to Gravel Springs Rd., take a left (opposite of how you came in)...go to the second red light, Morgan Rd and take a right. Go approx 2 miles to the next red light and take a right onto Old Peachtree Rd. Go approx 1 mile and look for Prospect Rd. on your left...take a left and we are 7/10 mile on your left...You will see Thompson's Tree Farm sign on your left.

August 27, 2016, Fall Meeting Program
Lawrenceville, Georgia
Hosted by the Thompson Family

8:30 - 9:00 am	Registration -- Ivey Creek Baptist Church	
9:00	Meeting called to order/Welcome/Overview	
9:15	Business Meeting	
9:30	Trees for Troops Update	Greg Smith
9:45	Round Table Discussion	Social Media Tree Varieties Fertilizing Updates
10:15	Vendor Introduction - Break - (Visit with our vendors)	
10:30	NCTA Update - Chuck Berry	
10:40	National Promotion Board - Board member	
11:15 -	Break (Visit with our Vendors)	
11:30	Tips for a Successful Gift Shop	Denise Thompson
12:15 -	Lunch (served at meeting hall)	
1:00	Weed Control in Christmas Trees	Dr. Mark Czarnota UGA
1:30	Break	
1:45	Grafting & Evaluation	Dr Mark Czarnota
2:15	Farm Tour	

Meeting Adjourned

**GEORGIA/FLORIDA CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION
REGISTRATION**

Fall Meeting ~ August 27,2016

Please fill in this information and return it to

Linda Wilson,

120 Cordele Hwy, Hawkinsville, GA 31036

or email the information to GACTA@comsouth.net

Name-_____

Farm_____

Address_____

Email_____

Spouse or Guest Name attending_____

Member attending \$30

Guest \$20

Total = \$_____

Lunch included to be catered at the meeting place. (church)



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SEEDLINGS ALERT

Superior Nursery at Lee, Florida. Phone 850-971-5159 They have increased the cost of bare root Southern Red Cedar to (\$250. per thousand) . They have Sand Pine, and Virginia Pine seedlings (\$100. per thousand.) and Spruce Pine (\$120. per thousand) available for the Fall Season.

Dwight Stansel Farm & Nursery, 5553 164th St, Wellborn, FL 32094, Phone 386-963-2827, e-mail [\[dsfntte@windstream.net\]](mailto:dsfntte@windstream.net) raises bare root Southern Red Cedar which they sell for \$218. per thousand.

The Division of Forestry--Andrews Nursery, Chiefland, FL, Phone 352-493-6096, will have bare root Sand Pine at \$50. per thousand. They currently have containerized (Plugs) Sand Pine available for \$200. per thousand..

Aucker's Nursery, Williston, FL, (See Advertisement), phone 352-528-3889, has very nice Leland Cypress liners, and three to twenty-five gallon containerized. They have a very nice educational Web Site: www.auckersnursery.com

BK Cedars (Susan Kossuth), Alachua, FL Phone 386-462-2060 has a good supply of three gallon(\$6.) genetically improved Southern Red Cedar ('Robin Blue') suitable for initial or replacement planting. She also has some larger sizes of Red Cedar, but no longer has Carolina Sapphires. I get a few of these to sell to customers who are thinking of digging a small tree. It is easier than digging, and I plant what ever is left over. Michael

The 2015 meeting was held at Whispering Pines farm. Joyce Schnoor and Mike & Eric Kelly were our hosts. The theme of the meeting was agritourism.



We visited a neighboring farm to see their built corn maze and other agritourism attractions tour



Sue Kossuth tries out the slide they had as one of the activities on our farm

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Air Potato Beetle

John Gregory

On our farm here in Alachua County, we have had a major problem with air potatoes. An air potato is a vine that grows rapidly over everything in it's area. It is much like kudzu in the way it grows. I attended a session on biocontrols for invasive plants and perked up when I heard that there were beetles that would eat the air potato vines. The beetles are imported from China, from where the original plants came.

My question was whether they would eat anything else. The answer is, no they won't. They eat the air potato only. In the winter, they will go into the soil and stay alive until the next year. Sometimes you will have to get additional ones to totally eradicate the air potato, which we have had to do.

The adult beetle is 9mm long and 4 mm wide, a really small bug. The color ranges from brown to orange to red. They are usually shipped in numbers of 500 in a small plastic tube that's inserted into a styro-foam box. The eggs of these beetles are yellowish, about 1 mm in length. They hatch after 4 days. Females release about 1200 eggs during their lifetime. The larvae feed on the leaves from the underside where they were laid. The adults feed on them too. The adults live for 5 to 12 months. They feed on the vine as well as the potato itself, which is formed after the vine has completed growing.

When we received our beetles we put them in the area where the air potato was growing. In about 4 months, we saw the results. Almost all of the air potatoes had been eaten. After the winter, they were all gone in that particular area. We need to obtain some more in order to eradicate the remaining air potatoes.

Hopefully we can find other natural eliminators of invasive plants of which we have several (Ardisia, for example).

Note: For those of you who wish to order some air potato beetles, go online to *Air Potato Beetle Release Forms for Florida*.



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Bill Murray

As remembered by Coy Dillahunt

His first tale to tell about how he got into Christmas Tree growing starts with being in college, getting interested in Christmas Trees, asking a professor how to get into the business. Was told he needed land. He asked how to get the land. Professor told him to find a girl with some and marry her. He did. They were still living in the house on the farm she inherited when he died.

Bill graduated from college in the mid 1950's. Worked for the Georgia forestry as an extension forester. By 1959 he had his farm running and was promoting the organization of the Georgia Christmas Tree Association. Association records show that his first efforts was a Notes to Christmas Tree Growers sent out in September of 1959 to promote the organization of the Georgia Christmas Tree Association. By 1961 he was successful. From that time on he was an advocate for the Christmas Tree industry. He served as Secretary for the Georgia Christmas tree Association for many years.

His efforts in promoting Christmas Tree farming continued as long as he lived. He served as President of the National Association but never got to serve but a few days as President of the Georgia Association. The morning he was to be installed as President of the Georgia Association, Bill suffered a heart attack. The Association installed him but he resigned because of health reasons as soon as he recovered enough to make the decision. He was slowed down but continued to work in promoting Christmas Tree production several years.

His heart attack happened at Dahlonega which is about 200 miles from his home. Later he had a stroke at home which he recovered from but could not talk. He was in rehab in the Atlanta area. Two of his friends in the Atlanta area agreed to pick him up and take him home on his release from rehab. They laughed for years that Bill tried to catch up on his missed talking on the way home.

Bill was a person that always wanted to help others with their problems as Christmas Tree Growers. He would take the time to answer questions of the farmers that were new.

Bill passed away March 26, 2016 at his residence. He was born in Augusta. He was a veteran of the United States Navy having served during World War II and an active member of the First Presbyterian Church of Cordele. As a young man he attained the rank of Eagle Scout and was the oldest living Eagle Scout in Crisp County. Bill was A Registered Forester, Researcher and Instructor and a Christmas Tree Production Specialist with the University of Georgia. He was the founder of The Southern Christmas Tree Farm in Cordele and was instrumental in establishing the Georgia Christmas Tree Association in 1960. He served on the Boards of the Georgia Christmas Tree Association and National Christmas Tree Association for over two decades and as President of the National Christmas Tree Association for two years. He identified and propagated a new species of evergreen, a hybrid of the Leyland Cypress and he was most proud that the Botanical Society named it the Murray Cypress. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Sara Stephens of Cordele, a daughter and her husband, Lynn and Manuel Chavarria, grandchildren Lacey Landon, A.J. and Manuel Chavarria and a great grandson, Jack London.

Thank you Bill for all you have done for the Christmas Tree industry and for answering all our questions when we were getting started. He will truly be missed.

MORE PHOTOS FROM THE 2015 FCTA MEETING



Sharing information and fellowship



Bill and Sara Murray



Jodi Utsman found a friend!



Mike Kelly demonstrates the Beneke

